

Re: M\$ attack on Common Sense

Source: <http://www.derkeiler.com/Newsgroups/alt.computer.security/2003-09/0851.html>

From: Sinister Midget (sm_at_kcsmartNOSPAM.org)

Date: 09/14/03

Date: Sun, 14 Sep 2003 04:28:12 GMT

As Leythos so eloquently gibbered on Sun, 14 Sep 2003 at 01:50 GMT:

> In article <79d0kb.q6p.ln@host.newsservicer.org>, sm@kcsmartNOSPAM.org

> says...

>> As Leythos so eloquently gibbered on Sat, 13 Sep 2003 at 23:33 GMT:

>>

>>> Linux is not a typical home user OS, it's about impossible for any

>>> typical, non-technical type, to install on their computer – esp. if they

>>> have to download and compile the source (which you would want to review

>>> before you compiled it right?).

>>

>> Right there is another point where lack of understanding is rampant.

>>

>> I've used linux for several years, at home, as my main desktop, and I

>> only started dealing with the server stuff later. Not once, never, not

>> at all, have I *ever* had to compile everything to get a desktop

>> machine. Period.

>>

>> Not once have I *ever* needed to check the source to see if it was

>> safe. Instead I've been able to download the ISOs from trusted sources,

>> check against the MD5SUMs to be sure they're safe, burn them, plug them

>

> Just because it has a MD5 checksum does not mean that it's safe – you

> have no idea if you don't review the source – and you've been blowing

> about usenet posting about how great OS is since it's sooo open to

> review. How can you trust them if you don't check them out first?

That's a fact. And I'm talking about a *home* environment, one I can gamble with a bit.

However, I don't believe there's any requirement that every user review every line of code to make sure it's safe. I know lots of users review every line of code, and I know I can trust the vast majority of them to be thorough in addition to being competent.

The fact that I *can* review any code I wish, at any time I wish, goes a long way toward my trusting things. I download a lot of things and don't always know them to be trusted sources. However, let me repeat:

home environment. I would *never* do the same in a production environment.

Also, I do NOT download things as soon as they come available. So there's more time to allow others to go through things and for me to get some feedback on things before I ever get the end product.

While MD5SUM doesn't guarantee that anything is safe, it does offer another means of checking the validity of the end product. That is the goal. In the end it's a matter of knowing who to trust and who to validate prior to trusting, then using the tools at your disposal to make sure things are what they say they are.

>> *in and install. Usually a few questions, a run to the corner grocery or a shower, and I come back to a machine ready to reboot into a fully operational and stable desktop.*

>

> *I seem to recall having to compile a great many things when D/L the linux distro's that we used a year ago. Even compiled the apps that came with it. As I recall, it was not something that even our Linux guru's were happy with. I can also recall that it was a pain to get it working in a Windows environment and that it took the better part of a day to get it all up and running in the mixed environment.*

Unless you were using Gentoo, that wouldn't be the normal case. If you were using Gentoo, take a look in the mirror to see who the culprit is.

If you decided you needed out of the ordinary software, this can also happen. But that is far from the norm.

The subject I addressed was the falsehoods concerning THE AVERAGE HOME USER and what it takes for them to HAVE A DESKTOP. The AVERAGE HOME USER doesn't have to compile a ton of stuff just to have a desktop. They need a set of CDs and a bootable CD drive. Period.

If they want Gentoo, they *should* have a clue about what they're getting into, knowing it will compile it almost totally from scratch. If they don't read just a tiny bit and end up trying Gentoo by mistake, shame on them.

>> *More than that, I've installed things with much less of a problem than I've ever had with Winders. I've only had to download a separate driver once. Except for that one time, at the end of the installation I had my video settings working properly, printer working, sound working, NICs working, all external drives working (SCSI, USB, IDE, etc), all except a scanner: I always have to set that up separately. The one time I had to download a driver was for a lexmark printer.*

>

> *I guess you've never installed Windows 2000 or Windows XP Professional or Windows 2000 Server, cause I do it all the time, and other than having to put the CD in with the drivers for special hardware there is*

> *very little to it – oh, and it comes up without a problem too.*

I have installed 2K Pro and XP Pro. Both required additional drivers. That step came *after* the install was ostensibly completed. Both required additional steps to get video to a usable state. 2K Pro required more work to get sound working properly. Both required me, after all of the installs and configuring, to get updates separately (Mandrake did it during the install).

I *did* do an XP Pro install that didn't need anything extra (except updates, naturally). But that was OEM and it had everything setup when it did the deed.

I've been spared 2003 Server, thank you very much. I'll let someone else do that from hereon in. I'm done with Winders problems (except for maintaining my son's 98 machine, which is destined to become obsolete when he's 5 or 6).

>> *Contrast that with every install I've done with a retail version of M\$ products. Not once has any of those booted into a properly working desktop that had even most things working correctly. Each and every one required me to install separate drivers (along with reboots for most), one at a time, and, in most instances, configure them for proper operation, all after installation was "complete".*

>
> *Contrast that with my neighbor – a 37 Y/O housewife that doesn't understand how to plug in a USB printer – has no clue as to anything with a technical nature. I gave her a computer yesterday with nothing on it (virgin hard drive), gave her the XP Prof CD, and an Office XP Prof CD and in 1 hour I came back and it was all running, and she could use it to get to the internet, access files from the other computer (after I told her how to open network neighborhood), and all the things you found > sooo hard to do.*

Did I use the word hard? Please point it out to me.

What I was alluding to is the fact that I had to do less to have more with linux. Not that any of it was hard, but that some of it was very time-consuming. I can install an entire desktop with everything configured in about 1/2 hour with linux. With Winders that covers the CD. Then there's the drivers. Add another hour (if lucky) and we have the updates installed. (I also take a long time to see what the updates broke, but I wasn't even calculating that part.)

In time spent, I'm running linux in a safer environment (i.e. better firewalling, updates current, etc) in the same amount of time it takes to just install the machine in Winders. To make them somewhat closer to the same in safety and security terms (not even possible, but let's pretend) takes about 3 times as long with Winders.

And I still don't know, after 3 times as long, if one of the updates broke something with the M\$ stuff. The likelihood is pretty high that something is bad after that, while the likelihood is everything is in good shape with linux. I say this because both have track records. The one built up by Micro-Soft hasn't been one that is easily trusted.

> *If I were to D/L the Windows distro it might be as easy for her, but*
> *there is no MS Office for it. If I were to hand her the CD's for Linux,*
> *after we downloaded and burned them to CD, she "might" have been able to*
> *install it, but then her software would not work on it (kids games,*
> *Office XP, etc...)*

Why would anyone want to operate inferior software (M\$ Office) on linux? Why not use one of the (better) native products: OpenOffice, Abiword, etc?

The mind boggles!

>> *You really should check your facts just a bit before finding yourself*
>> *lost in a sea of gibberish. Whether you pretend to know something you*
>> *don't, or you're deliberately misleading things, the above, as put*
>> *forth by you, is pure voodoo nonsense.*
>
> *It really seem as though you are the one posting nonsense – I'm posting*
> *from real world experience with thousands of workstation and hundreds of*
> *servers (all OS's) under my belt, not to mention supporting my family*
> *and friends on all their OS's. It sounds like you really should get some*
> *experience with products newer than 98 or ME.*

See above.

Let me quote:

>> > *Linux is not a typical home user OS, it's about impossible for any*
>> > *typical, non-technical type, to install on their computer – esp. if they*
>> > *have to download and compile the source (which you would want to review*
>> > *before you compiled it right?).*

Clearly, that's not in line with your claims about being knowledgeable.

YOU need to check something more recent than kernel 0.1.4.

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I wanted to make a list of all Microsoft innovations. Then I remembered that CTRL-ALT-DEL is handled by the BIOS.